

**Amendments to the Claims:**

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) An image generation system comprising:  
a memory which stores a program and data for image generating; and  
at least one processor which is connected to the memory and performs processing for image generating,  
the processor performing:  
depth cueing for an object on condition that the object is positioned within a depth cueing area such that the color of the object being more distant from a viewpoint is made closer to a target color, the depth cueing area being set ~~unrelated to a size and a shape of the object~~ based on a position of the viewpoint;  
varying an alpha ( $\alpha$ ) value of the object on condition that the object is positioned within the depth cueing area so that the object being more distant from the viewpoint becomes more transparent;  
varying a depth cueing value for each vertex of the object based on a Z-value for each vertex of the object;  
varying the alpha value for each vertex of the object based on the Z-value for each vertex of the object;  
sorting objects of which alpha values are varied so that the objects are drawn in succession starting from an object nearest to the viewpoint; and  
drawing an image viewable from a virtual camera in an object space in drawing order determined by the sorting processing while performing hidden-surface erasing based on a Z-buffer process for the objects of which alpha values are varied.
2. (Previously Presented) The image generation system as defined in claim 1,

the processor further performing:

drawing a most distant background including a color different from the target color.

3-9. (Canceled)

10. (Currently Amended) An image generation system comprising:  
a memory which stores a program and data for image generating; and  
at least one processor which is connected to the memory and performs processing for image generating,  
the processor performing:  
varying an alpha ( $\alpha$ ) value of an object depending on the distance between the object and the viewpoint on condition that the object is positioned within a depth cueing area, the depth cueing area being set ~~unrelated to a size and a shape of the object~~based on a position of the viewpoint;

sorting objects of which alpha values are varied so that the objects are drawn in succession starting from an object nearest to the viewpoint; and

drawing an image viewable from a virtual camera in an object space in drawing order determined by the sorting processing while performing hidden-surface erasing based on a Z-buffer process for the objects of which alpha values are varied.

11. (Currently Amended) A computer-usable program embodied on an information storage medium or in a carrier wave, comprising a processing routine for implementing:

depth cueing for an object on condition that the object is positioned within a depth cueing area such that the color of the object being more distant from a viewpoint is made closer to a target color, the depth cueing area being set ~~unrelated to a size and a shape of the object~~based on a position of the viewpoint;

varying an alpha ( $\alpha$ ) value of the object on condition that the object is positioned within the depth cueing area so that the object being more distant from the viewpoint becomes more transparent;

varying a depth cueing value for each vertex of the object based on a Z-value for each vertex of the object;

varying the alpha value for each vertex of the object based on the Z-value for each vertex of the object;

sorting objects of which alpha values are varied so that the objects are drawn in succession starting from an object nearest to the viewpoint; and

drawing an image viewable from a virtual camera in an object space in drawing order determined by the sorting processing while performing hidden-surface erasing based on a Z-buffer process for the objects of which alpha values are varied.

12. (Previously Presented) The program as defined in claim 11, further comprising a processing routine for implementing:

drawing a most distant background including a color different from the target color.

13-19. (Canceled)

20. (Currently Amended) A computer-usable program embodied on an information storage medium or in a carrier wave, comprising a processing routine for implementing:

varying an alpha ( $\alpha$ ) value of an object depending on the distance between the object and the viewpoint on condition that the object is positioned within a depth cueing area, the depth cueing area being set ~~unrelated to a size and a shape of the object~~ based on a position of the viewpoint;

sorting objects of which alpha values are varied so that the objects are drawn in succession starting from an object nearest to the viewpoint; and

drawing an image viewable from a virtual camera in an object space in drawing order determined by the sorting processing while performing hidden-surface erasing based on a Z-buffer process for the objects of which alpha values are varied.

21. (Currently Amended) An image generation method comprising:

depth cueing for an object on condition that the object is positioned within a depth cueing area such that the color of the object being more distant from a viewpoint is made closer to a target color, the depth cueing area being set ~~unrelated to a size and a shape of the object~~ based on a position of the viewpoint;

varying an alpha ( $\alpha$ ) value of the object on condition that the object is positioned within the depth cueing area so that the object being more distant from the viewpoint becomes more transparent;

varying a depth cueing value for each vertex of the object based on a Z-value for each vertex of the object;

varying the alpha value for each vertex of the object based on the Z-value for each vertex of the object;

sorting objects of which alpha values are varied so that the objects are drawn in succession starting from an object nearest to the viewpoint; and

drawing an image viewable from a virtual camera in an object space in drawing order determined by the sorting processing while performing hidden-surface erasing based on a Z-buffer process for the objects of which alpha values are varied.

22. (Original) The image generation method as defined in claim 21, further comprising:

drawing a most distant background including a color different from the target color.

23-26. (Canceled)

27. (Currently Amended) An image generation method comprising:

varying an alpha ( $\alpha$ ) value of an object depending on the distance between the object and the viewpoint on condition that the object is positioned within a depth cueing area, the depth cueing area being set ~~unrelated to a size and a shape of the object~~based on a position of the viewpoint;

sorting objects of which alpha values are varied so that the objects is drawn sequentially from an object nearest to the viewpoint; and

drawing an image viewable from virtual camera in an object space in drawing order determined by the sorting processing while performing hidden-surface erasing based on Z-buffer process for the objects of which alpha values are varied.